

# The Pacer

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PGA Special Business District

## Coping with Covid-19

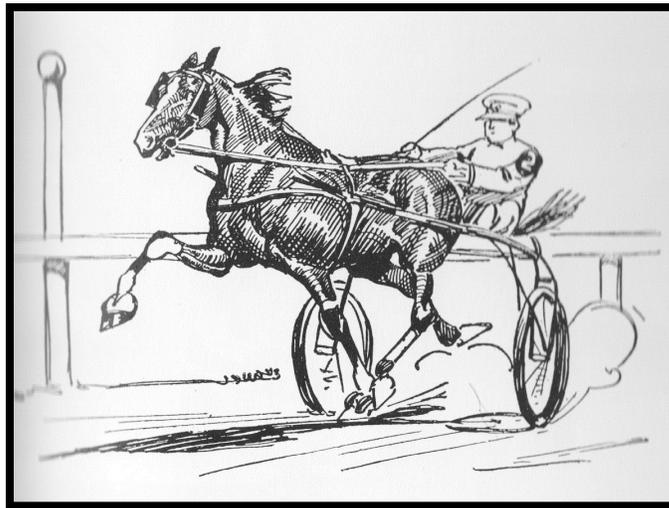
*Neighborhood adjusts to pandemic*

There are several potential candidates for the 2020 Parkview Gardens Association Award. (The deadline was April 1.) But the closing of University City schools has held up the application process. The PGA Board of Directors has delayed its spring meeting to abide by St. Louis County social distancing guidelines. Once the board receives the applications and reviews them, the recipients of the award will be announced.

The PGA Special Business District is once again co-sponsoring the U City Memorial Day Run. Organizers hope to go ahead with the 2020 event, but it will be delayed and probably held in a different form.

At press time, nearly everything but grocery stores,

pharmacies and banks is shut down because of the coronavirus. Some people are predicting re-openings sometime in April, but these statements are optimistic. Before going to a business, government facility



*Pacer canters on into its 24th year.*

or event, call ahead or check the internet.

One essential service that continues to operate is recycling and trash collection. It can't be said often enough: use the recycling bins in the neighborhood but don't put plastic bags (which contami-

nate the whole bin) in them. Either pour the bottles, cans, etc. from plastic bag to bin, or collect them in a paper bag. Complete information is at [ucitymo.org/691/Recycling](http://ucitymo.org/691/Recycling).

It's spring, and despite the pandemic, some activities continue in the neighborhood's three community gardens. At Clemens, Andy Cross from McPherson Garden in the Skinker-DeBaliviere area has repaired the bulletin board. At Syracuse, Droege Tree Care has pruned the catalpa trees that overhang the garden to increase safety. The work was paid for by the PGA-SBD. Regular monthly garden workdays have been suspended, but improvements are still being carried out under arrangements that allow for social distancing. Gateway Greening, co-sponsor of the gardens with the PGA-SBD, has suspended operations.

## Brighter Days Ahead

### *For U City*

Mayor Terry Crow acknowledged that we're living in difficult times but struck a positive note at this year's State of the City address, delivered March 5 at City Hall. The Historical Society sponsored the event. He noted that the crowd, numbering about 60, was smaller than at last year's event, probably because of the worldwide coronavirus alarm. In 2019, U City and other area officials had spent a lot of time on Better Together, the proposal to reunite St. Louis city and county. The time seems to have been wasted because the proposal collapsed, but Crow said appearances were deceiving. It was "a discussion we needed to have," as the merger issue is bound to come up again. With the Olive/I-170 development, "we are in the impatient period," and can only wait while the developers pursue financing for the new shopping center. He praised anchor tenant Costco. The next phase of Loop Trolley travails is likely to be removing the tracks and other infrastructure, but this will be disruptive to business and he is in no hurry to begin. (He was speaking before Joe Edwards announced a possible revival of the trolley; see below.) U Citians can be grateful that most of the trolley route is in St. Louis. The U City Loop has a number of vacancies, partly because rents are high. Tenants can get cheaper rents east of Skinker.

On a brighter note, Crow said that this summer ambulance service was re-

turned to the U City Fire Department. Mutual aid agreements with neighboring cities have been reinstated. A proposed hotel/ apartment/retail center for the Delmar/I-170 intersection is going forward. That intersection has more potential for development because it is so close to booming Clayton. Kingsland Walk and other new buildings around the city are under construction. Crow asked residents to participate in the U.S. Census. An accurate count helps the city in applying for grants. He also invited people to participate in the planning process this summer, which will include discussion of relations with Washington University. A study of city departments' space requirements will soon be finished and decisions, including one about a permanent police headquarters, will follow.

City Manager Gregory Rose said that crime is trending down. The U City Police Department leads the region in drone deployment. Almost all patrol cars have been equipped with dash cameras. The Fire Department has 12 new paramedics. Some city staff are driving Leaf electric vehicles. LED lighting has been installed in City Hall. City finances are sound. He is seeking more funds for street repair, tree trimming and code enforcement. He said "U City is being reimagined." The updating of the Strategic Plan offers "an opportunity for each of us to dream."

## Renovation Delayed

### *At U City library*

The start of work on renovation of the public library has been pushed back a little, library director Patrick Wall announced in a meeting March 6. It now seems likely that the building will close to the public in mid-August. (He was speaking before the building closed because of the coronavirus.) The first stage will be removing hazardous materials. An announcement is coming soon about the opening of a storefront office which will allow cardholders access to the collection. All books and other materials will have to be removed from the library building. Wall is seeking funds that will allow him to retag books, videos, etc. He also hopes to receive funds for recabling of the building and rebates for installing high-efficiency lighting. The HVAC unit is expected to be moved to the roof, which will open up storage space. The picture windows will probably be replaced by safer, more energy-efficient mullioned windows. Under the current plan, the basement will hold the IT department, U City Historical Society, mechanicals and storage. The ground floor will have study rooms, a quiet reading room and an area where patrons can use laptops and eat and drink. The second floor will have separate children's and teen areas and a video-recording studio.

## 23 Years of the Pacer

### *Newsletter covers changing area*

This is the 23rd anniversary

issue of the Parkview Gardens Pacer. Its name refers to a type of horse-and-buggy racer and harkens back to the early 1900s, when the eastern half of the neighborhood was a race track. The first issue, in April 1997, reported on construction of a parking garage across from the Tivoli. A Loop apartment was to be featured on the University City House Tour April 27. Volunteers were asked to help out in a community cleanup day.

#### *20 Years Ago*

The April 2000 issue announced the expansion of Clemens, the largest of the three community gardens co-sponsored by the Parkview Gardens Association SBD. The U City Memorial Day Run, which PGA also co-sponsors, was returning after a one-year hiatus.

#### *15 Years Ago*

The April 2005 issue announced the youth summer program held by the U City Dept. of Parks and Recreation. The PGA-SBD offered scholarships to residents of this neighborhood. Construction of Loop Living, the apartment building at Vernon and Westgate, was announced.

#### *10 Years Ago*

The April 2010 Pacer reported on a debate among the candidates for mayor, Bob Wagner, Terry Crow (the current mayor) and Shelley Welsch, who was to win the election. Work began on the City Hall renovation project.

#### *Five Years Ago*

The April 2015 issue noted a March 12 ceremony attended by the mayors of U City and St. Louis which marked the begin-

ning of construction on the Loop Trolley. Three local luminaries got their stars on the walk of fame: activist Frankie Muse Freeman, comic book artist Lee Falk and soprano Christine Brewer.

## **Trolley Redux?**

### *And skyscraper nicknames*

The March 20 issue of the West End Word reported that



*One Hundred Building*

Joe Edwards, who heads the trolley taxing district, has not given up on the Loop Trolley. He hopes it will resume operations, possibly as early as April, on Thursday-Sunday, with the addition of a third car.

The same issue covered the approaching completion of the One Hundred Building in the Central West End, which will hold the

city's most expensive rental apartments. The building already has a nickname. For years, Londoners have been amusing the world by bestowing nicknames on the city's oddly shaped skyscrapers: The Shard, The Gherkin (British for pickle), The Walkie-Talkie. St. Louis didn't have amusing monikers, but it turns out local wits were only waiting for a building with a distinctive silhouette to inspire them. The One Hundred has been appropriately renamed The Stack of Coffee Filters.

## **Insect Infiltrators**

### *Stink bugs awaken*

We're all spending more time at home than usual, and you may have noticed little gray-brown bugs crawling sluggishly around your apartment. They're brown marmorated stink bugs, an invasive species from Asia that arrived in Pennsylvania in 1996. They snuck into your apartment last fall and found cozy hiding places. Milder temperatures and longer days have awakened them, and they're fumbling around in search of fruit and leaves. They can fly, and sound nasty when they're buzzing around, but they don't sting or bite. The time to prevent infiltration is late summer, by sealing cracks around windows, doors and baseboards and replacing damaged screens. For the present, all you can do is eject them as they reappear. Stamping on them is not advised. There's a reason they're called stink bugs.

## **Bored At Home?**

### *Online services to the rescue*

Olin Library at Washington University and U City Public Library are closed. (They may reopen sometime in April.) But if you have a UCPL card, you can access all sorts of materials via the website, [ucpl.lib.mo.us](http://ucpl.lib.mo.us). Libby and Overdrive have ebooks and audiobooks. Hoopla has these as well as films and TV shows. Rbdigital has magazines. Kanopy offers films, including rarities like *Titanic* (not the one with Leo but "the banned 1943 German epic"), excellent and undeservedly obscure films of recent years (*Eighth Grade* and *You Can Count on Me*) and video courses (*How to Draw*).

Contact the editor: [davidlinzee@yahoo.com](mailto:davidlinzee@yahoo.com)

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Parkview Gardens Association  
830 Vanderbilt Avenue  
University City MO 63130

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### **News of the Neighborhood:**

- \*Adapting to coronavirus**
- \*Latest on library renovation**
- \*U City's top officials report**